



ENERGY STAR® Set-top Box Program
Industry Comments on
Version 1.0 Draft Specification
February 4, 2000



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The following is a summary of industry comments received to date regarding EPA's Version 1.0 draft set-top box specification. Approximately 10 companies submitted information and/or suggestions. All feedback will be considered as EPA prepares Version 2.0 of the draft specification, which will be posted on the Internet at www.energystar.gov in late February 2000.

General

- One manufacturer described EPA's draft specification as "reasonable."
- Another manufacturer indicated that it has Internet access devices and digital TV converter boxes that would comply under the proposed 1-Watt specification.

Digital Cable TV Set-top Boxes

- One manufacturer indicated that while its digital cable boxes currently consume more than 8 Watts in the standby/low-power mode, they could meet the proposed specification with some effort.

Advanced Analog Cable TV Set-top Boxes

- One manufacturer suggested that another product category be developed for advanced analog set-top boxes. Further, it was proposed that these boxes be required to meet the 8-Watt specification.

DBS Systems

- One manufacturer explained that a lower standby level (i.e., 8 Watts) couldn't be achieved because the receiver has to be able to receive commands from satellite at almost any time. The LNB, tuner, and signal processors must be on at all times to receive and process commands sent by the service provider.
- Another company commented that DBS set-top boxes would never be able to reach the proposed 8-Watt specification because they must continually power the antenna to receive program guide and subscription data.
- One respondent commented that significant power reductions in the future are unlikely given the maturity of DBS systems. Further, this respondent asserted that the industry has already reduced power consumption by 50 percent.
- A few manufacturers provided counterproposals for the 8-Watt specification: 12 Watts (not including the antenna) and 12-15 Watts (including the antenna).

Combination Products

- One company suggested that the Qualifying Products section should be clarified to include mention of combination products or devices with multiple functionalities.
- Another company suggested that products with more than one function be able to qualify under the product category with the most liberal standard (e.g., 8 Watts). Under this scenario, the following sentence would be stricken from the MOU: "Products with more than one function may qualify for the label under the product category that best reflects how they are marketed and sold to the consumer."

- One company proposed that EPA create a category for combination products. These products would be required to reduce energy consumption by a given percentage over stand-alone products. For example, the ENERGY STAR specification would be determined by taking the specification for the most energy intensive function (e.g., 8 Watts) *plus* one-half of the specification for each additional function (e.g., 4 Watts or 0.5 Watts).

Cable Modems

- One manufacturer requested that devices with cable modem technology (such as analog cable boxes and Internet access devices) be allowed to qualify for the ENERGY STAR label under the 8-Watt category. Alternatively, a general category could be created for products that maintain network connectivity or the ability to wake up from a remote source.

Personal Video Recorders (PVRs)

- One respondent recommended that a separate category be developed for PVRs with an energy-efficiency specification of 30 Watts.

Coordination with Other International Guidelines

- One company suggested that EPA consider raising its digital set-top box specification to 9 Watts in order to be consistent with a recently released European Union specification.

Product Testing/Effective Dates

- One manufacturer suggested that testing take place over a 24-hour period.
- Given the uncertainty in the set-top box market, one manufacturer suggested that EPA release a specification and then review it with industry in approximately one year.